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October 15, 2010

The Honorable Julius Genachowski
Chairman, Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: "MB Docket No. 10-71, Petition for Rulemaking to Amend the Commission's Rules Governing Retransmission Consent"

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

The National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators (NHCSL) represents over 300 Hispanic state legislators across the country. Our mission is to promote policies that increase quality of Life for Latinos and Americans. As the president, I write to request that you issue a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on retransmission consent, to safeguard the interests of not only Hispanic communities, but all communities. Our constituents should be able to enjoy programming that is important to them, such as local news, sports, weather, Spanish-language-content, without concern of increased fees or blackouts from poorly-managed negotiations between carriers and content providers. NHCSL passed a resolution, sponsored by Representative Mara Candelaria-Reardon (IN) on this issue. This resolution may be viewed at www.nhcsl.org.

Retransmission consent reform is needed to ensure that consumers are not deprived from programming as a result of last-minute negotiations which could cause blackouts or loss of service. We therefore encourage retransmission reform that may include binding arbitration to ensure uninterrupted service to consumers while negotiations take place.

Over the past few years, there have been a growing number of last-minute retransmission negotiations between broadcasters and multichannel video programming distributors (MVPDs), which have placed consumers in the middle of a battle. We ask that the FCC take a stand and reform retransmission consent to ensure affordable broadcast television without the threat of interrupted services. Consumers, including Hispanics, are bearing the increased costs in the form of higher cable and satellite rates. It is important to mention that during the March 2010 ABC network blackout that left over 3.1 million viewers in the dark, Hispanic viewers were unable to view a special program regarding the February 27th Chilean earthquake – an earthquake that may have affected many of their friends and family members.

The current rules for retransmission consent are archaic and no longer make sense. We request that the Commission safeguard the interest of Hispanics and of all

consumers by promptly issuing a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to consider a restoration of balance in the ever-changing, ever-evolving programming market.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Iris Y. Martinez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Senator Iris Y. Martinez (IL)

President, National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators